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ABSTRACT

The historical change in educational status projections of Georgia rural youth was examined from 1966-1972. Used as the sampling unit, counties were: (1) rural, (2) characterized by low socioeconomic status, and (3) representative of all state regions. All schools in each county with a 10th grade class were used, although not necessarily the same schools at both times due to desegregation and private school formations. Identical questionnaire and testing procedures were used both times. Responses ranged from: (1) quitting high school to pursuing post graduate work, and (2) most to least important for importance of education. Some findings were: (1) educational aspirations had not undergone any major changes from 1966 to 1972; (2) educational expectations decreased rather strongly from 1966 to 1972 for black males and white females, but only minimally for black females and white males; (3) the modal expectation category was to complete high school and pursue some vocational or technical training both in 1966 and 1972; (4) urban residence and high family status occupations were related positively to high educational aspirations and expectations for white males and females but not for black males and females; and (5) education was ranked less important in 1972 by white rural youth than by black youth. (NQ)

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Educational Projections of Georgia Rural Youth: A Historical Comparison*

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INTRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE

Georgia's contribution to the panel discussion on the historical change in educational status projections of southern rural youth is an examination of these projections for a sample of Georgia rural youth. The time span for the Georgia study is from 1966 to 1972. The sample respondents were high school sophomores in 1966 and in 1972.

The sampling unit for the selection of sample schools, and, thus, sophomore classes was the county. The counties selected were rural; seventy-five percent or more of the population in each sample county was classified as rural according to the 1960 census. They were characterized by low socioeconomic status. The mean annual family income in 1960 for all sample counties was equal to or less than $3,400 per year. The counties were also selected to be representative of all regions of the state. Counties in the southern part of the state were selected that had a population which was 50 percent white and 50 percent black.

All schools in each sample county which had a tenth grade class were selected for study. Both the black and white schools in 1966 were studied. In 1972 again all schools in each of the sample counties which had a tenth grade were studied. The same schools were not necessarily present at both points in time due to desegregation and the formation of private schools by 1972. The instrument and testing procedures at both points in time were identical.

Educational aspirations were defined as an individual's positive desire toward some educational goal. They were measured by asking the respondent "If you could

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have as much education as you desired and were completely free to choose, which of the following would you do?". Responses ranged from quitting high school to pursuing post graduate work.

Educational expectations were defined as the level of education a person thinks he or she will likely obtain. It was measured by asking the respondent, "What do you really expect to do about your education?". The response set for educational expectations was the same as the one provided for aspirations.

The importance of education was measured by having the respondent rank order seven goals from 1 to 7. The goals were, in order of presentation to the respondent, (1) Having lots of free time to do what I want; (2) To develop my mind and get all the education I want; (3) To earn as much money as I can; (4) Getting the job I want most; (5) Living in the kind of place I like best; (6) Having the kind of house, car, furniture, and other things like I want; and (7) To get married and raise a family. Importance of education then is the rank score for the educational goal item. A rank score of 1 indicates the goal item is most important, whereas, a rank score of 7 indicates the goal item is least important.

FINDINGS

Educational Aspirations. The data in Tables 1-1 and 1-2 are concerned with educational aspirations. Educational aspirations are cross classified by race, sex, and year.

Table 1-1 about here

Table 1-2 about here

The educational aspirations of Georgia rural high school sophomores have not undergone any major changes from 1966 to 1972. The modal educational aspiration category in 1966 for black males and females and white males and females is to complete high school and pursue some kind of vocational or technical training. This is also the modal educational aspiration category for these four race-sex

categories in 1972.

A small change toward convergence of college educational aspirations is noted for white and black females and black and white males from 1966 to 1972. The direction of the change is toward the proportion of college aspirations held by white males. The proportionate range in college aspirations is from 50 percent to 39 percent in 1966. In 1972, the range is from 40 percent to 45 percent. Overall, males from 1966 to 1972 tended to lower their aspirations slightly, whereas, females tended to raise their aspirations during the same time period.

Educational Expectations. Tables 2-1 and 2-2 show the educational expectations for black and white, male and female rural youth in 1966 and 1972.

Table 2-1 about here

Table 2-2 about here

The educational expectations of high school sophomores have undergone greater change from 1966 to 1972 than did aspirations during the same time period. This is the case especially for black males and white females. The other two categories-black females and white males showed little change in expectations from 1966 to 1972.

Black males from 1966 to 1972 show a rather strong change toward lower educational expectations. There is an 11 percent increase from 1966 to 1972 in the proportion expecting to graduate from high school. On the other hand there is a 15 percent decrease in the proportion expecting a college degree or to complete graduate study.

White females also show a rather large change in their educational expectations from 1966 to 1972. The pattern of change was for the proportion expecting to quit high school or to graduate from high school to increase. The proportion expecting a college education or a graduate education for all purposes did not change from 1966 to 1972. Overall, there was a tendency for expectations to be lowered by

white females. The magnitude of the change, however, was not as great as it was for black males.

The modal category for educational expectations, apart from the changes already noted, is to complete high school and pursue some form of technical or vocational training. This is the case both for black and white males and for black and white females. Further, this is the modal category in 1966 and 1972.

Importance of Education. Comparison of the rank importance of education for each race sex category from 1966 to 1972 is shown in Tables 3-1 and 3-2.

Table 3-1 about here

Table 3-2 about here

There are some important differences from 1966 to 1972 in the ranking of education as a desirable goal. The respondent was asked to rank education in conjunction with six other goals dealing with job, income, family, residence, material things, and the amount of leisure time desired.

White males and females from 1966 to 1972 clearly rank education as a less important goal to them in 1972. The differences are especially strong for white males. Sixty-two percent ranked it as most important in 1966 and only 34 percent ranked it as most important in 1972. Black females show, for all purposes, no change in their ranking of education. In fact, their mean importance scores are identical in 1966 and in 1972. Black males show some change from 1966 to 1972 but this is primarily a change from seeing education as most important to viewing it as the second most important goal. The primary difference in 1972 is for whites and especially males to view education as much less important than blacks. These differences were significant in 1972 but were not in 1966.

We calculated the means and F-tests for all 7 goal items both in 1966 and in 1972. This was done in order to examine what were white males and females ranking as important at both time periods and what change in the rankings of the seven goal items occurred from 1966 to 1972. Table 4 shows the means for the seven

goal items for white and black males and females both in 1966 and in 1972.

Table 4 about here

What we find is that white males have come to rank free time, to live where I want to, and to have the material things I want as more important in 1972 than in 1966. The importance of free time for white males and females increased by 1 rank from 1966 to 1972. The average rank for white males was 5.9 in 1966 and 4.9 in 1972.

Racial differences on three of the goal items, persist from 1966 to 1972. Money or income and material things are ranked as more important in 1966 and 1972 by blacks than it is by whites. Whites, however, rank family as more important than do blacks at both time periods.

CONCLUSIONS

The major findings of this historical comparison of black and white, male and female, Georgia youth from 1966 to 1972 is that similarities overshadow differences with the possible exception of the importance of the education variable. Educational aspirations underwent only minimal change from 1966 to 1972 for black and white males and females. What small change did occur came in terms of all other race-sex categories converging in 1972 toward white males college aspiration level.

Educational expectations decreased rather strongly from 1966 to 1972 for black males and white females. There was only minimal change in expectations for black females and white males. Even with these changes which are noted, we still find that the modal expectation category is to complete high school and pursue some kind of vocational or technical training. This is the modal category both in 1966 and 1972.

Introducing controls for actual residence and the family's main money earner's occupation produced the expected results for white males and females. That is, urban residence and high status occupations for these two race-sex groups are related in a positive direction to high educational aspirations and expectations.

This relationship holds for white males and females both in 1966 and 1972.

These two control variables, however, show no consistent results for the educational aspirations and expectations of black males and females. Mean educational aspirations and expectations may be highest for the small town or middle level occupational positions in one comparison and not the next. The means also differe by sex but again not in any consistent fashion. Thus, we conclude that residence and family's main money earner's occupation has no relationship to black males and females educational aspirations and expectations either in 1966 or in 1972.

The major change we observed occurring between 1966 and 1972 was with respect to the mean rank importance of education. White males and females in the Georgia rural sample rank education much less important in 1972 than they did in 1966. Also, they rank education as less important than black males and females in 1972, whereas, in 1966 white females ranked education as slightly more important than black females. Education has come to be seen as less important in 1972 by white rural Georgia youth.

Table 1-1 Educational Aspirations of Black and White Rural Males, Georgia 1966-1972

Aspirations	Black 1966	Black 1972	Black Change	White 1966	White 1972	White Change
Quit High School	6%	7%	+1%	10%	7%	-3%
Graduate High School	5%	9%	+4%	10%	13%	+3%
H.S. & Tech. School	33%	37%	+4%	31%	30%	-1%
Grad. Junior College	6%	7%	+1%	4%	6%	+2%
Grad. College	30%	26%	-4%	31%	23%	-8%
Complete Grad. Study	20%	14%	-6%	14%	21%	+7%
Total	100% (N=109)	100% (N=93)		100% (N=188)	100% (N=172)	
	X^2=4.296	d.f.=5	p=.55	X^2=7.669	d.f.=5	p=.20

Table 1-2 Educational Aspirations of Black and White Rural Females, Georgia 1966-1972

Aspirations	Black 1966	Black 1972	Black Change	White 1966	White 1972	White Change
Quit High School	2%	6%	+4%	2%	4%	+2%
Graduate High School	5%	6%	+1%	7%	12%	+5%
H.S. & Tech. School	54%	43%	-11%	48%	34%	-14%
Grad. Junior College*	0%	4%	+4%	4%	5%	+1%
Grad. College*	15%	19%	+4%	26%	31%	+5%
Complete Grad. Study	24%	22%	-2%	13%	14%	+1%
Total	100% (N=128)	100% (N=124)		100% (N=208)	100% (N=174)	
	X^2=6.745	d.f.=4	p=.20	X^2=9.469	d.f.=5	p=.15

*Category for Blacks collapsed for X^2.

Table 2-1 Educational Expectations of Black and White Rural Males, Georgia 1966-1972

Expectations	Black 1966	Black 1972	Black Change	White 1966	White 1972	White Change
Quit High School	8%	4%	-4%	7%	6%	-1%
Graduate High School	5%	16%	+11%	16%	20%	+4%
H.S. & Tech. School	38%	44%	+6%	34%	36%	+2%
Grad. Junior College	6%	7%	+1%	8%	4%	-4%
Grad. College	29%	19%	-10%	28%	24%	-4%
Complete Grad. Study	14%	10%	-4%	7%	10%	+3%
Total	100%	100%		100%	100%	
	(N=109)	(N=95)		(N=188)	(N=176)	
	X^2=11.430	d.f.=5	p=.05	X^2=5.429	d.f.=5	p=.40

Table 2-2 Educational Expectations of Black and White Rural Females, Georgia 1966-1972

Expectations	Black 1966	Black 1972	Black Change	White 1966	White 1972	White Change
Quit High School	2%	6%	+4%	3%	6%	+3%
Graduate High School	4%	7%	+3%	11%	18%	+7%
H.S. & Tech. School	55%	48%	-7%	51%	36%	-15%
Grad. Junior College	2%	3%	+1%	3%	7%	+4%
Grad. College	17%	19%	+2%	25%	26%	+1%
Complete Grad. Study	20%	17%	-3%	7%	7%	0
Total	100%	100%		100%	100%	
	(N=129)	(N=121)		(N=113)	(N=175)	
	X^2=4.922	d.f.=5	p=.45	X^2=48.586	d.f.=5	p=.001

Table 3-1 Importance of Education for Black and White Rural Males, Georgia 1966-1972

Rank Importance	Black 1966	Black 1972	Black Change	White 1966	White 1972	White Change
1	66%	50%	-16%	62%	34%	-28%
2	8%	18%	+10%	10%	10%	0
3	5%	9%	+4%	6%	12%	+6%
4	7%	4%	-3%	7%	8%	+1%
5	5%	6%	+1%	5%	9%	+4%
6	9%	9%	0	5%	9%	+4%
7	1%	4%	+3%	4%	17%	+13%
Total	100%	100%		99%	99%	
	(N=103)	(N=54)		(N=186)	(N=138)	
Mean Score	2.07	2.39		2.13	3.44	
	X^2=8.173	d.f.=6	p=.25	X^2=34.347	d.f.=6	p=.001

Table 3-2 Importance of Education for Black and White Rural Females, Georgia 1966-1972

Rank Importance	Black 1966	Black 1972	Black Change	White 1966	White 1972	White Change
1	73%	70%	-3%	75%	61%	-14%
2	7%	11%	+4%	9%	12%	+3%
3	2%	2%	0	2%	8%	+4%
4	4%	5%	+1%	6%	6%	0
5	8%	2%	-6%	1%	4%	+3%
6	4%	7%	+3%	2%	4%	+2%
7	2%	2%	0	4%	5%	+1%
Total	100%	99%		99%	100%	
	(N=119)	(N=84)		(N=204)	(N=156)	
Mean Score	1.89	1.89		1.73	2.15	
	X^2=4.31	d.f.=6	p=64	X^2=17.559	d.f.=6	p=.01

1966 Race-Sex Means F value = 2.09 p=.101

1972 Race-Sex Means F value = 14.67 p>.001

Table 4. Mean Rank Importance of Seven Goals Items, Georgia Rural Youth 1966-1972.

GOAL ITEM	1966 (N=635)					1972 (N=590)				
	Black		White		F Value	Black		White		F Value
	M	F	M	F		M	F	M	F	
Free Time	5.8	5.6	5.9	5.7	0.74	5.2	4.9	4.9	4.7	0.63
Education	2.1	1.9	2.1	1.7	2.09	2.4	1.9	3.4	2.2	14.7***
Money	3.4	3.7	4.0	4.5	16.40***	3.4	3.6	3.9	4.6	10.6***
Job	2.5	2.7	2.3	2.8	4.30**	2.9	2.8	3.1	3.1	0.94
Residence	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.2	0.35	4.5	4.6	3.9	4.1	4.79**
Material	4.3	4.4	4.8	5.1	10.19***	4.5	4.8	4.3	5.1	5.47**
Family	5.6	5.5	4.6	3.9	30.70***	5.1	5.3	4.3	4.1	7.41***

** = .01 Level

*** = .001 Level